

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Today Congressman John W. Olver released the following statement in response to the president's FY09 budget:

"The president's budget is more of the same - safeguarding tax cuts for the rich while pumping billions into the war and neglecting our priorities here at home. In a time of rising prices and a slowing economy, it takes real nerve to propose a budget that will harm so many.

"If a program helps the elderly or the poor, this president sees it as an immediate target for savings. It is unconscionable that the president is proposing a \$570 million cut in LIHEAP despite the fact that home heating costs are soaring. It would be a cold, dangerous winter for many if this budget were enacted.

"The president's request also takes a sledgehammer to Medicare and Medicaid by slowing growth \$14.2 billion in the next year alone. A cut of this magnitude will gravely endanger the health of American's seniors, people with disabilities and low-income children.

"Not only is this a harmful budget, it is also a highly deceptive budget. Although the Administration claims its budget eventually reaches balance, under realistic assumptions it remains in deficit every year. The president is playing games by hiding the true costs of the war in Iraq and by not allocating funds to keep the AMT from ensnaring millions of middle-class taxpayers. When taking office, the president was handed a surplus on a silver platter. Seven years later, his fiscal policies have turned record surpluses into record deficits.

"This budget was dead on arrival. I will work with my colleagues to ensure that our nation's priorities are reflected in its budget."

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